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MEMORIAL

OF

THOMAS M. HALL.



PHILADELPHIA:

(PRIVATELY PRINTED.)

1865.



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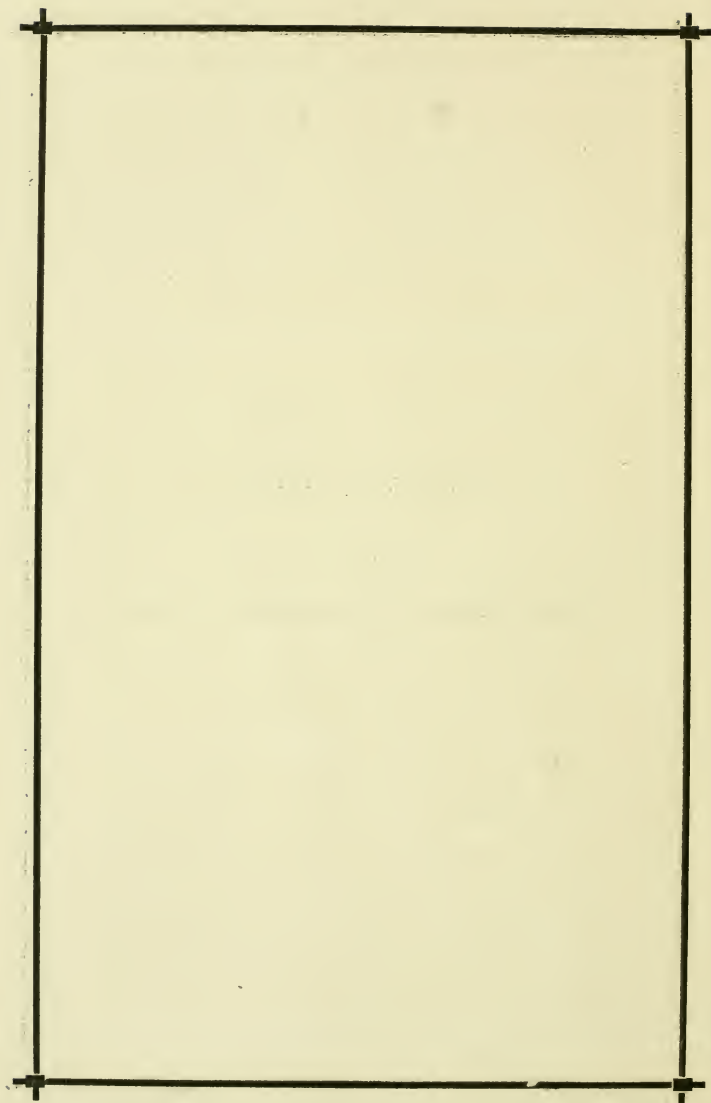
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OBITUARY NOTICE,

FROM

"THE PRESS" OF NOVEMBER 9TH, 1864



LIEUTENANT-COLONEL HALL.

IT is with the sincerest sorrow that we record the death of Thomas M. Hall, late Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the 121st Pennsylvania Volunteers, who died in this city on Sunday morning last, in the thirtieth year of his age. Lieutenant-Colonel Hall was the eldest son of the Rev. Dr. John Hall, of Trenton, New Jersey, and was born in Philadelphia, June 2d, 1835. He graduated at Princeton College, and soon after commenced the study of the law in the office of his uncle, the Hon. William M. Meredith, and was admitted to the Bar in October, 1856.

At the breaking out of the present war, in 1861, he actively identified himself with the well-known artillery company of Colonel Chapman Biddle, and, in August, 1862, when the 121st Regiment was raised for three years' service, although not at all in robust health, he determined to give himself to the service of his country in the field, and accompanied the regiment as its adjutant. His

regiment was in hard service from the time it first went out from Philadelphia. At Fredericksburg it formed a part of General Meade's division, which broke through the rebel lines. At that battle the regiment lost severely. Adjutant Hall behaved with conspicuous bravery. His horse was shot under him. At the subsequent battles of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg he displayed soldierly qualities of a high order. In the steady, never-ending routine of official business, with its innumerable vexations, he was ever untiring in his faithfulness. Never absent from his post, he was foremost in every fight, and foremost in every good work that tended to improve his regiment. For more than a year after his health was seriously impaired he persisted in going through the severest labors and exposure without a murmur.

Though not in the regular line of promotion, Adjutant Hall was, in the spring of 1864, at the request of his brother officers, appointed major of the regiment, and was subsequently made lieutenant-colonel. Soon after this his health, which had been for a long time failing, gave way entirely, and he was obliged to resign the service, in order to prolong for a few short months a life which had already, as it were, been freely given to his country. Pennsylvania has never mourned a truer soldier, or

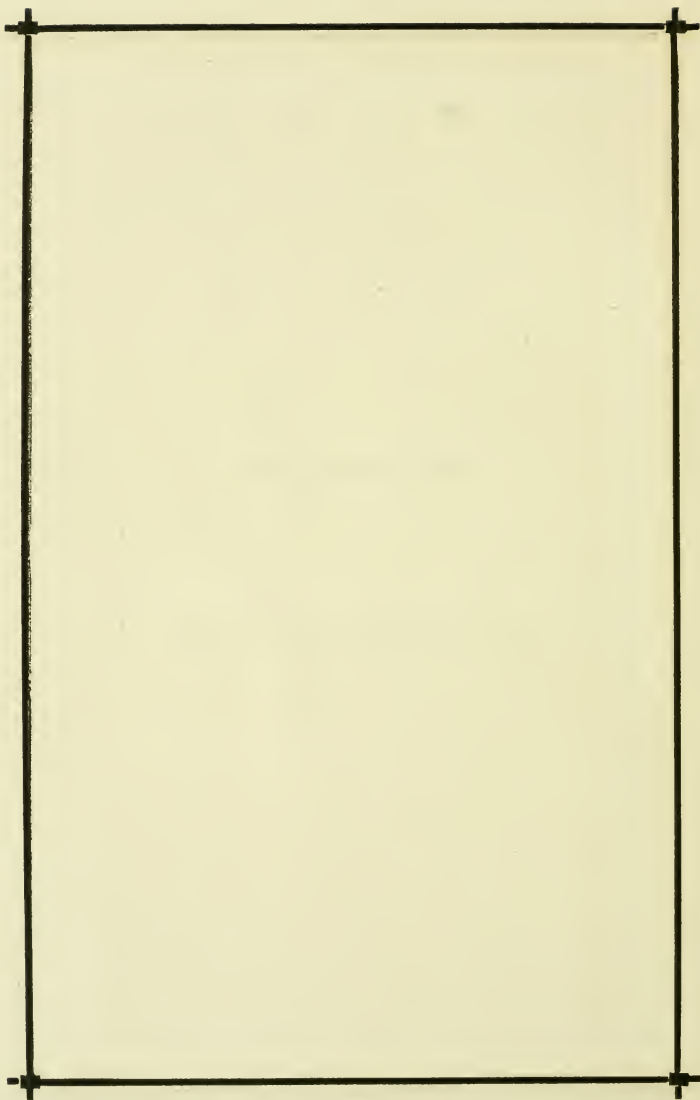
one of more unselfish purity of life. He knew not self; his constant thought was for the comfort of others. With the highest order of courage he combined a gentleness of disposition almost feminine. Respect was too cold a word to express the feeling of his regiment for him, who asked none to follow where he dare not lead. Of the many excellencies of his private life we cannot trust ourselves to speak. Alas! that such a precious life—one abounding in every social and domestic virtue—could not have been spared for further years of usefulness.

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1914

PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE PHILADELPHIA BAR.



PROCEEDINGS.

AT a meeting of the Bar of Philadelphia, held in the Supreme Court room, on Thursday, November 10th, 1864, in reference to the death of Lieutenant-Colonel THOMAS M. HALL, on motion of Horace Binney, Jr. Esq., the Honorable William Strong was called to the chair, and George M. Conarroe, Esq., was appointed secretary.

The object of the meeting was stated in a few appropriate remarks by the Chairman, who was followed by Colonel Chapman Biddle. Colonel Biddle spoke as follows :

It is customary, Mr. Chairman, on the death of a member of this bar, for his surviving associates to meet to give utterance to their feelings of sorrow ; and, though doubtless it may occasionally happen that this outward mark of respect to the memory of a departed brother is not well merited, yet I hazard nothing in the present instance by saying that it affords to each one here a melancholy

satisfaction to be able to testify by his presence the sincere and affectionate regard in which he holds in remembrance his late friend Thomas M. Hall.

Colonel Hall died in this city on the 6th day of November, instant, in the 30th year of his age, of disease accelerated, if not contracted, by severe service in the Army of the Potomac during the greater portion of the campaigns commencing shortly prior to the first battle of Fredericksburg. In the summer of 1862, when, from the disastrous issue of the Peninsular campaign, it became evident that large reinforcements for the army were indispensably necessary, not merely to preserve the integrity of the nation, but to repel anticipated invasion, Colonel Hall, though far from being in robust health, after duly estimating the peculiar sacrifice involved in his case, became convinced that duty required him to take up arms in defence of his country and government. His resolution once taken, action quickly followed, and entering the military service of the United States as adjutant of the 121st Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, he continued with that regiment until ultimately he became its lieutenant-colonel and commanding officer. The fatigues and exposure incident to his new mode of life unfortunately proved too much for his delicate constitution, and

before the lapse of many months the effects of the violent and continued strain upon his system became manifest. His unselfish and uncomplaining nature was reluctant to the last, however, to make known even to his most intimate companions the firm hold which disease had taken of him.

To heroism in the field were united fidelity, zeal, and intelligence in the discharge of his arduous and constantly recurring duties; and without exaggeration it may be added that no more conscientious soldier has done service during the present rebellion. The close relations which of necessity exist among officers serving together, afford the most favorable opportunities for obtaining insight into character, and I speak the common sentiment of his fellow-officers when I say that his has borne successfully the scrutiny to which it was subjected.

The study of the law, to which the years of his manhood had been devoted, had thoroughly grounded Colonel Hall in its principles. Endowed by nature with a quick and logical mind, and one that had been largely improved by liberal education, he was entitled, and would have received a position high among the leading members of the profession. Honorable in his dealings with all men, he was especially regardful of his obligations

to the court whilst advocating the interests of his clients.

In politics he entertained decided opinions, but nevertheless he cheerfully accorded to those who differed with him full credit for the sincerity of their convictions, and by his cordial and winning manners gained for himself the esteem and friendship of his opponents.

Deeply religious, though unobtrusive in his piety, he was ever, in judging the actions of men, abounding in that charity which distinguishes the true Christian.

Sorrowing friends may well mourn the loss of a beloved companion whose career of usefulness has been terminated in the prime of manhood; but the example of his well-spent life is, however, left them for their improvement and imitation.

J. G. Rosengarten, Esq., after a short reference to his intimate association with Colonel Hall, as an officer of the same regiment, offered the following resolutions :

Resolved, That the Bar of Philadelphia have learned, with unfeigned regret and sorrow, of the death of their late associate, Colonel HALL, who, during his brief career at the Bar and in the courts

of this city, manifested such learning and integrity, such gentleness of character and earnestness of purpose, as to secure the respect of his associates, the confidence of the judges before whom he practiced, and the hearty friendship of all who knew him; while, by his patriotism and self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of his country, he closed, with distinguished honor, the record of a short but well-spent life. Earnestly convinced of the justice of the war in which the country is engaged, he joined the army, and took an active part in its Virginia campaigns. At Fredericksburg, at Chancellorsville, and at Gettysburg, he was distinguished for his coolness, his gallantry, and his example to the men of his own regiment and of his brigade. In spite of failing health, he remained constantly in the field, fulfilling all the laborious duties of his post, regardless of his own comfort, careful and thoughtful of the interests of his comrades, and at last received well-deserved promotion and the command of his regiment. Broken in health, he returned home to spend a short time with his friends and his family, and to die.

Resolved, That this meeting desires to place upon record its sense of his manly virtues, of his promise of success at the bar, of his unselfish

sacrifice of home and its sacred and tender ties for the service of his country; of his untiring zeal in the field, of his gallantry in action, and of the patient and persistent endurance of the discomforts and hardships of the campaigns in which he participated; of the noble fortitude with which he bore himself in the face of a relentless disease, and of the Christian resignation with which he met his death.

Resolved, That a committee of five, together with the officers of this meeting, be appointed to transmit to the family of Colonel HALL a copy of these resolutions and of the proceedings of the meeting, as an expression of sympathy of the Bar of Philadelphia.

The resolutions were seconded by Wm. Henry Rawle, Esq. Mr. Rawle said:

MR. CHAIRMAN:—

It was not my good fortune to know Colonel Hall as intimately as the two gentlemen who have just spoken of him so feelingly, but I had looked forward to the time when he should come among his professional brothers and I should know him well. Instead of this, I find myself standing beside his grave. Those of us who

have attained middle life and see, one by one, our seniors taken from us, feel that we too must soon follow them, and not unnaturally acquire a habit of watching those who, younger than ourselves, may reasonably be presumed to fill our places when they shall become vacant. I had thus watched Mr. Hall for several years, and even before I had known him. We were first thrown together by being members of the same military organization, and then it was that the more I saw of him the more I felt how much sterling worth he possessed. For he was so gentle and yet so firm; so modest and yet so self-dependent; so tolerant of the opinions of others, and yet so fixed in his own ideas of what was right, that he impressed all who met him. And then he was so essentially a gentleman. True, he was born and bred one, and it was shown in his appearance, in his speech and in his daily life; and although it might be said that he could not help being a gentleman, there are many who, possessing the same advantages, have yet missed this end. This quality in him produced that unselfishness, that anxiety not to wound the feelings, or even offend the prejudices of others, which all who knew him saw in him day by day.

When he entered the army, and news would come up from his regiment, (that regiment in which were so many whom we all knew so well,) it was pleasant to hear about him. How hard-working he was; how conscientious; how careful of others; how comparatively careless of himself; how uncomplaining—in a word, how thorough—such were the accounts in which all who spoke of him or wrote of him concurred. As he entered the army from the strictest feelings of duty, so, while in it, he bore himself as became his high character, and it may be truly said, that he was his country's and his God's "faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end."

To those of us who had looked forward to his return to his home and his profession, there is something inexpressibly sad at finding ourselves here gathered to pay this tribute to his memory. When we thus meet after the death of one of our number who has gone down to his grave full of years and of honors, and surrounded by all that should accompany old age, no element of bitterness mingles with our sorrow. It seems meet and right that all should have been thus, and that he too should have been added to "the good examples of those who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their

labors." But with us now, it is different. For with him who is dead, all that was past seemed but the promise of all that was to come; and as we think of this future unfulfilled—unfulfilled to himself and unfulfilled to others—it is hard to repress the train of thought which at times sweeps through the lines of "In Memoriam," and which challenges "our dearest faith, our ghastliest doubt." But when time shall have somewhat lessened the sharpness of our sorrow, there will follow sweet and pleasant memories of all those scenes in which he had a part, and as we thus dwell upon the past, will come the hope that in the future our end may be like his, and that at the last—

"He that died in Holy land
Would reach *us* out the shining hand,
And take us as a single soul."

W. Rotch Wister, Esq., also spoke as follows:—

MR. CHAIRMAN:—

I concur with every word in the resolutions. I concur with every sentiment that has been expressed by those who have preceded me.

I knew Colonel Hall well—and had known

him, man and boy, for nearly twenty years. He was some years my junior, and I remember him first as an intelligent, high-minded, open-hearted, generous boy. What was promised by his boyhood was more than fulfilled by his manhood, for he was an intelligent, upright, generous man. Though I did not see him in the army, I had good opportunities of knowing what he did and what he was whilst there, and I, therefore, gladly agree to what has been so well said by those who were his fellow-officers.

Colonel Hall's education and talents entitled him to a high consideration at this bar and in the community; and had health and life been spared him, he was as certain of success in life as any of his cotemporaries. My intercourse with him, however, was of another character; it was in his pleasures and amusements that I saw him—in the social circle—at the family hearth. He endeared himself to all with whom he was thrown into close connection.

Firm in his convictions, stedfast in his opinions, determined to do what he thought right; he was, at the same time, amiable to a great degree, and generous to his opponents. His friends will long remember him. I have said, Mr. Chairman, that

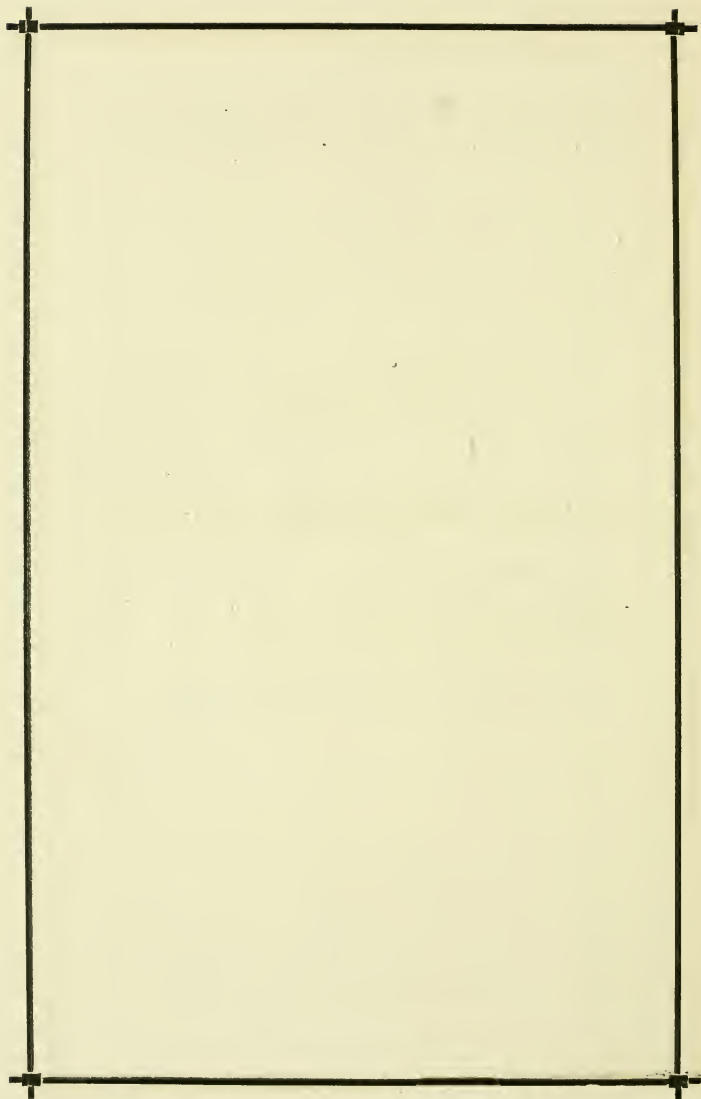
Colonel Hall was an intelligent, high-minded, upright man. Can higher praise be awarded to any?

Feeling reference was also made to the character of the deceased by Lewis D. Vail, Richard L. Ashhurst, and E. Spencer Miller, Esquires, after which the resolutions were unanimously adopted.

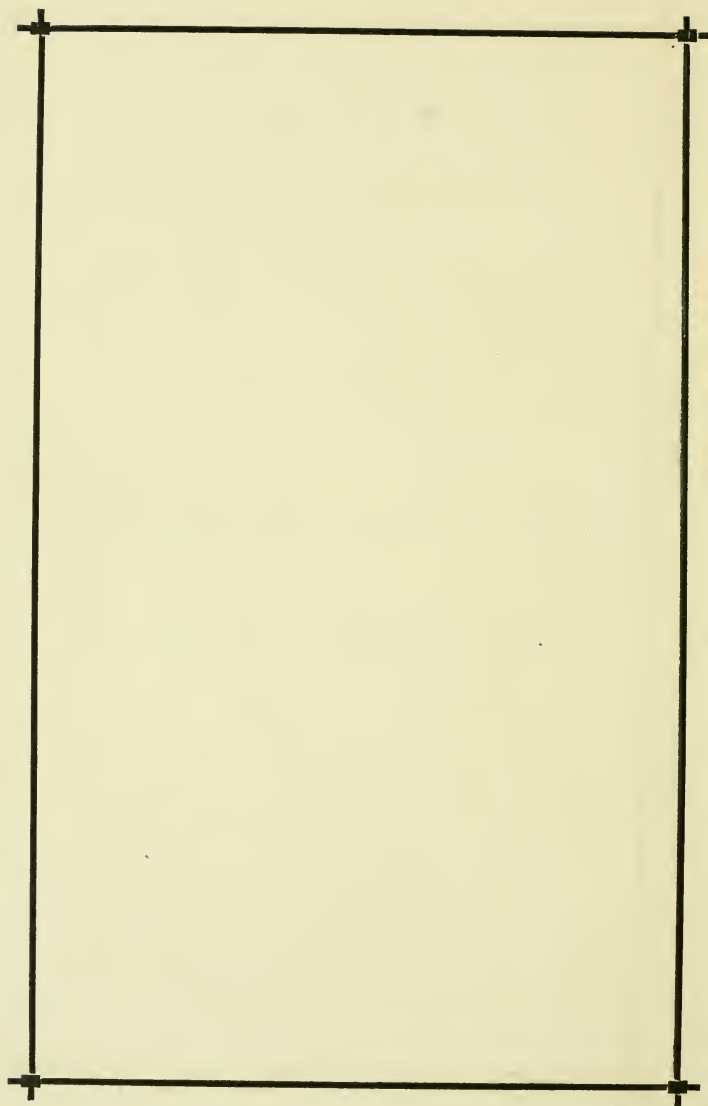
The chairman appointed as the committee of five, under the third resolution, the following gentlemen, viz.: Chapman Biddle, Horace Binney, Jr., William Henry Rawle, William Rotch Wister, and Joseph G. Rosengarten.

On motion of Henry C. Townsend, Esq., the proceedings of the meeting were ordered to be published.

On motion, the meeting then adjourned.



PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
OFFICERS OF THE 121ST REGIMENT
OF
PENNSYLVANIA VOLUNTEERS.



PROCEEDINGS, ETC.

At a meeting of the officers present with the 121st Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers, held at the head-quarters of the regiment, near Petersburg, Virginia, November 15, 1864, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:—

Whereas, It is with deep sorrow and regret that we learn of the death of our late beloved commander and esteemed friend, Lieutenant-colonel THOMAS M. HALL,

Resolved, First, That we deem it a duty we owe to the memory of a brave officer to join in this testimonial of our high regard.

Resolved, Second, That in him we were accustomed to recognize those traits of character combining the true gentleman and soldier that tend to endear the commander to his subordinates.

Resolved, Third, That on the battle-fields of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, he evinced bravery of a superior order, and, by his undaunted and fearless example, inspired the men with confidence and enthusiasm.

Resolved, Fourth, That as regimental adjutant he always discharged his duties promptly and faithfully, and was unanimously called upon by the officers present with the regiment to fill the vacancy caused by the promotion of Major Biddle, and was soon after promoted to be lieutenant-colonel. But he was not permitted to remain long with us. His health, which for more than six months had been visibly declining, now became so delicate that he was obliged to be sent home, where, after continuing for a short time, it has been our unspeakable misfortune to learn of his death.

Resolved, Fifth, That we tender to the family and friends of the deceased our heartfelt sympathy in this their deep affliction, and hope they may be sustained in the severe ordeal through which they are called upon to pass.

Resolved, Sixth, That these resolutions be sent to the family of the deceased, and copies to the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Sunday Dispatch* for publication.

CHAS. L. ATLEE,

Commanding Regiment, President.

P. R. GRAY,

1st Lieut. and R. Q. M., V. President.

F. F. DAVIS,

Assistant Surgeon, Secretary.

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